



United States Attorney District of New Jersey

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FORMER PLEASANTVILLE, NEW JERSEY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR EXTORTION CONSPIRACY

CAMDEN, N.J. – Former Pleasantville, New Jersey Board of Education (PBOE) member David Thomas was sentenced today to a year and a day in prison for funneling \$23,700 in bribes to former PBOE members Jayson G. Adams and Maurice “Pete” Callaway, United States Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

David Thomas, 34, of Pleasantville, pleaded guilty on June 17, 2010, before United States District Judge Joseph E. Irenas to an Information charging him with conspiracy to commit extortion under color of official right. Judge Irenas also imposed the sentence today in Camden federal court.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in court:

From May to November 2006, Thomas facilitated the payments of bribes from a government cooperating witness (CW) to Adams and Callaway. Specifically, Thomas used a dormant contracting company that he owned to conceal the bribe payments. Thomas accepted several checks from Adams that Adams had been given by the CW, totaling approximately \$23,700. Thomas deposited the checks, which were made payable to the company, into the company’s bank account and then provided cash payments of equal value to Adams, who then made cash payments to Callaway. Thomas admitted that he knew the payments were made in order to obtain Adams and Callaway’s official assistance, action and influence in matters pertaining to their positions on the PBOE.

In addition to the prison term, Judge Irenas sentenced Thomas to three years of supervised release.

On September 6, 2007, 11 public officials – including Adams and Callaway – were arrested in connection with this investigation. All of these individuals have pleaded guilty or been convicted at trial. Both Adams and Callaway pleaded guilty to attempted extortion under color of official right and were sentenced by United States District Judge Jerome B. Simandle to 30 and 15 months in prison, respectively.

U.S. attorney Fishman credited special agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Michael B. Ward, for the investigation leading to today’s sentence. He also credited prosecutors and investigators with the Atlantic County Prosecutor’s Office, under the direction of Prosecutor Theodore F.L. Housel, for their assistance in the investigation.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Gramiccioni of the United States Attorney's Office Special Prosecutions Division.

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Defense counsel: James J. Leonard Jr., Esq, Atlantic City, N.J.